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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 PARIS 000461

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TAGS PREL, EUN, MARR, PHUM, CD, SU, FR

SUBJECT: CHAD/SUDAN/EUFOR: FRENCH PRESIDENCY ON SARKOZY'S

VISIT TO CHAD AND POSSIBLE NEXT STEPS

REF: A. PARIS 431 (NOTAL) B. PARIS 273 (NOTAL) C. PARIS 432 (NOTAL)

Classified By: Political Counselor Andrew Young, 1.4 (b/d).

1. (C) SUMMARY: Romain Serman, AF-advisor at the French Presidency, on March 10 reviewed Sarkozy's February 28 visit to Chad and discussed pos

2. (C) Romain Serman, one of the two working-level AF-advisors at the French Presidency, on March 10 met with acting AF-watcher and UK Embassy Sarkozy's Visit

13. (C) As reported Ref B, Sarkozy faced a skeptical media and NGO community prior to the February 28 trip to Chad, with criticism centered on

14. (C) According to Serman, Sarkozy had two priorities in Chad -- first, to insist that the fate of missing political opponents be determined

15. (C) On the oppositionists, Serman asserted that French pressure yielded positive results, if only partial, citing the release of Lol Mahama

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Yornogar's status as a Deby opponent, did not put much stock in his political judgment or his position on most issues. Serman said that Chad st Political Dialogue and Next Steps

16. (C) Serman stressed the importance of making progress on Sarkozy's second priority of encouraging meaningful political dialogue in Chad. Se

17. (C) After discussing the facts of the EUFOR soldier's death (ref A), Serman said that all concerned parties should work to see that Sudan c

18. (C) Serman said that steps should be taken to deter Sudanese "escalation" with respect to Chad because Bashir seemed ready to fight. Howeve

19. (C) In the immediate term, the objective was to avoid another Sudan-backed rebel offensive before the onset of the rainy season in May/June

10. (C) When Sarkozy visited South Africa after the stop in Chad (ref C), the South Africans told him they could play an active and helpful rc

11. (C) Serman mentioned that other signals could be sent to Sudan, including subtle reminders of possible International Criminal Court intere

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but we think the specter of ICC involvement could serve as an additional lever to discourage Sudan from backing a new rebel offensive. Those wh

12. (C) In conclusion, Serman summarized French priorities -- increased political dialogue within Chad, including resolution of the controvers

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